



RENOVATING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE MODEL IN LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTERS IN VIETNAM

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ABSTRACT

Summary: This article systemizes and analyzes the arguments about the organizational structure model in libraries and information centers (LICs) today; surveys and analyzes the modernization situation in LICs in Vietnam; current status of the organizational structure model in LICs in Vietnam; proposes to renovate the organizational structure model applicable to LICs in Vietnam.

KEYWORDS: Organizational structure, Library management, Information center management, Vietnam.

INTRODUCTION:

In recent decades, there have been many changes in library and information activities in Vietnam. Most of Vietnamese LICs are now transitioning from the traditional to the modern library model. This transitioning is inevitable and brings many benefits to library users as well as LICs, but it also poses many problems for modern library management including the need for renovating organizational structure.

In fact, many researchers have mentioned the theory of the organizational structure as well as the organizational structure model of modern LICs. According to Chester I. Barnard [1]; Nguyen Huu Tri [11]; Bui Anh Tuan, Pham Thuy Huong [12] organizational structure is the arrangement of organizational elements as well as establishing relationships among those elements. Organizational structure is understood as the internal structure with the relationships of parts of the organization, constituting elements in the space of the organization, the structure of the elements that make up the organization to perform a specific task. According to Robert D. Stueart and Barbara B. Moran [10]; Krishan Kumar [7] organizational structure is the first important management tool of all organizations for the effective use of resources. Establishing an organizational structure in a LIC can be understood as building a system of departments and identifying the relationship, coordination mechanism between departments in the library to achieve general goals set out. To manage LIC, different organizational structure models can be chosen such as: Online, functional, online - function, matrix ... Each of these organizational structure models has its own advantages and disadvantages. According to Lancaster [8], the application of IT has had a strong impact on the organizational structure of LICs, changing the nature of operations of some departments. Automation destroyed some departments, reduced the size of some other departments, and created new ones. According to Robert D. Stueart and Barbara B. Moran [10] Science & Technology not only affects the restructuring of work in LICs, but also has a great impact on the organizational structure of LICs. Online organization model, functionality will be changed by different models. LICs will have many changes in structure and workers will become accustomed to working in periodically-restructured organizations to match the new requirements. According to Krishan Kumar [7] the impact of Science & Technology has created challenges for LIC operations management, solving these challenges requires restructuring the organization in a modern direction as the traditional model does not adapt to changes in human resources as well as in professional activities in LICs. Tran Thi Minh Nguyet [9] analyzed the impact of information technology on library operations and particularly emphasized the need for change in the management of Vietnamese libraries, including the necessity of organizational structure renovation in LICs.

As can be seen, many researchers have given their viewpoints on the organizational structure of LIC in the current period. Although approaching from different perspectives and levels, most of the views determine that the change in organizational structure in LIC is inevitable. From the above points of this study, this research applies theoretical issues about the organizational structure model of LICs, analyzes the current situation and recommends suitable organizational structure models for LICs in Vietnam in order to contribute to improving effective management in LICs.

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models for LICs in Vietnam in order to contribute to improving effective management in LICs.

RESEARCH METHOD:

The author used the following research methods:

- **Analysis and synthesis:** The author inherits the previous related research works, synthesizes and analyses the research results obtained.
- **Social investigation:** By questionnaires and interviews.

To determine the current state of modernization, the organizational structure model in the LICs in Vietnam, the author of this article conducted a questionnaire survey at 72 LICs. The sample of the survey was selected according to the principle of stratification by heterogeneous respondents, and different types of LICs were selected: academic, public, and special. Survey locations cover the North, Central and South of Vietnam. Respondents are officials and managers. The survey aspects focus on the modernization situation in LIC and assess the organizational structure model: advantages and disadvantages; needs for model renovation.

The author has conducted interviews with a number of state management officers in the field of library and information; Managers of a number of LICs.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Libraries and information centers in Vietnam are moving from traditional to modern models:

The survey results show that the appearance of LICs has changed markedly. Many LICs are equipped with modern equipments, especially information technology equipments to achieve the goal of computerization, automation of professional processes, building electronic libraries, developing information systems. Survey results show that most of the major LICs have established information technology infrastructure. 60/72, accounting for 83% of LICs has their own server systems to install software to serve professional activities, of which the system of special libraries, multi-disciplinary accounts for the highest rate, 90.2% of surveyed special and multi-disciplinary libraries already have a server system. Many libraries and learning resource centers (LRCs) have dozens of servers. Hue LRC 15 machines; Da Nang LRC 13 machines; the Library and Information Center of Vietnam National University (Hanoi) 15 machines; National Library of Vietnam 14 machines. In addition to the investment in computer systems is the investment in information management softwares. The actual survey results show that Vietnamese LICs have applied much different software to manage activities. The aggregated data in chart 1 illustrates the current situation of software usage in LICs.

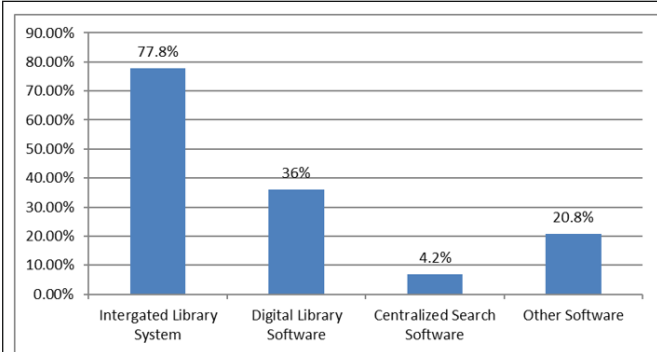


Chart 1: Proportion of libraries using software

Data analysis shows that 77.8% of the surveyed libraries applied integrated library systems (ILS). 26/72, accounting for 36% of the surveyed libraries have applied digital library software to manage and build full-text databases, digital collections. This result shows that the trend of building digital libraries has formed and is thriving in large LICs in Vietnam today. Federated search software is new software in the field of library and information. This software supports LICs to manage many different types of databases in one system and provides users with a single interface but can access many different sources of information and databases. In the world, this software is mainly chosen by large libraries of developed countries to apply because of high investment costs. However, up to now, in Vietnam, there have been 3 LICs selected and applied this software which are Vietnam Academy of Science, Vietnam National University (Hanoi), Ho Chi Minh City National University.

In addition to the investment in information technology infrastructure, investment in developing information resources, especially electronic resources such as books, magazines, electronic databases, and building digital libraries invested by LICs in different scales. This fact has changed the structure of information resources in major LICs in Vietnam. Survey results in Table 2 show that in specialized and multidisciplinary libraries, information centers and learning resource centers, the proportion of electronic documents is increasing compared to traditional documents. In some academic libraries the proportion of electronic and traditional documents is even nearly equal such as Vietnam National University (HCMC), Thai Nguyen LRC.

Table 1: Illustration of the number of electronic documents in some Vietnamese libraries
(Calculated by title of document)

Library, center	Traditional documents	Electronic documents
Vietnam National University (HCMC)	71,000	53,000*
Thai Nguyen University's Learning Resource Center	44,000	38,000
Vietnam National University (Hanoi)	157,000	47,000*
Hue University's Learning Resource Center	25,000	10,000*
Vinh University	28,000	25,000
Hanoi Polytechnic University	110,000	30,000*
University of Danang's Learning Resource Center	50,000	3,500*
National Library of Vietnam	2,500,000	30,000*

Note: * (Also includes many other databases)

Professional activities such as information processing and organizing, service provision have been automated. Chart 2 summarizes professional work that has been applied information technology at Vietnamese LIC.

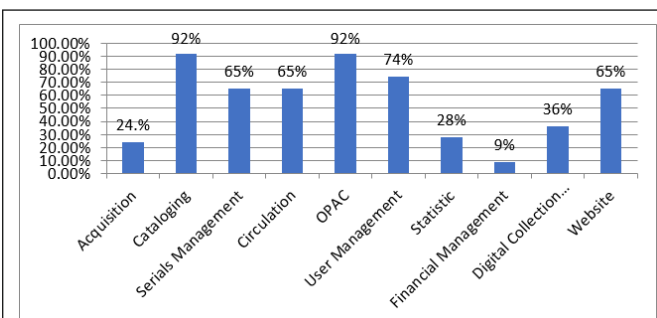


Chart 2: Proportion of libraries applying computerization in works

Thus, through surveys at a number of big LICs in Vietnam from aspects such as IT infrastructure, information resources, information processing and organization, and library and information service, it shows that Vietnamese libraries are has been changed a lot. The process of applying IT to library activities has created many changes in the structure of information resources, the process of organizing and distributing information. It can be said that the big LIC have had a strong shift to the modern library model.

Current status of the organizational structure model:

The results of the statistical survey in Table 2 indicate that the majority (85%) of LICs in Vietnam are currently applying the online organizational structure model, function model or a combination of these two models.

The functional model divides LIC into functional departments and establishes the relationship between functional departments and leaders. Employees in functional departments are subject to the management of the department head and perform professional work within their department. Head of departments and divisions are managed by superior leaders, which can be directly from the director or deputy director. The functional model creates specialization and stability of LIC. However, the coordination between departments and divisions in LIC is often difficult due to the boundary between specialized departments.

Table 2: Percentage of organizational structure models applied

Model	Specialized, multidiscipline		Public		Total	
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
Online, functional	46	90.2	15	71.4	61	85
Other	2	3.9	0	0.0	2	3
Unknown	3	5.9	6	28.6	9	12

The online organizational structure does not divide LIC into functional departments, in this model, the leader, the manager directly directs the staff. This is a model that enhances the role of leaders, executive power of LIC leaders. The communication connecting departments within an organizational structure is often a one-way imperative.

In the view of researchers, the online organizational structure model, function model which are commonly applied in LIC has revealed many limitations. Robert D. Stueart and Barbara B. Moran [10] considered the online organizational structure model, function model as bureaucratic model. The bureaucratic model emphasizes the role of individual leaders and the leadership regime. But the main limitation of this type of structure is less flexibility and rigidity. This model does not explore the full capabilities of each individual in the organization. It also creates lot of pressure on managers because they have to handle a large amount of information, therefore it is easy to lead to a delay in the organizing the work.

The online, functional model is only suitable for a stable environment with little variation. With the current development of LIC in Vietnam, applying online organizational structure, function model will reveal inadequacies and create management difficulties.

This inadequacy is reflected in the survey results evaluating the comments of LIC leaders' comments on the reasonableness of the currently applied organizational structure model, which is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Evaluation of the current status of the applying organizational structure model

Criteria	Specialized, multidiscipline		Public		Total	
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
Reasonable	12	23.5	7	33.3	19	26
Acceptable	36	70.6	12	57.1	48	67
Unreasonable	3	5.9	2	9.5	5	7

Data analysis shows that only 19/72, accounting for 26% of library leaders, assessed that the current organizational and management model as reasonable, while 48/72 accounted for 67%, considered acceptable, and 5/72, accounting for 7%, considered unreasonable. The survey results show that the organizational structure models commonly applied in LICs in Vietnam are not very appropriate, revealing inadequacies and creating difficulties for management activities. The survey results also show that up to 70% LIC plans to change their organizational structure in the future.

As can be seen, most of the organizational structure models being applied in LICs in Vietnam today are not really suitable with development practice. This fact creates difficulties for managers, on the other hand it affects the performance of LICs. To solve this problem, Vietnamese LICs need to have innovation in their organizational structure model to ensure meeting the new requirements of the

modern library model.

Proposing the organizational structure model in libraries and information centers in Vietnam:

From analyzing the arguments of scientists about the organizational structure model in LICs today as well as analyzing the current status of the organizational structure model in LICs in Vietnam, this research proposes the organizational structure model for Vietnamese LICs. This is a hybrid model between functional model which is currently being applied very popularly in Vietnam and group working model.

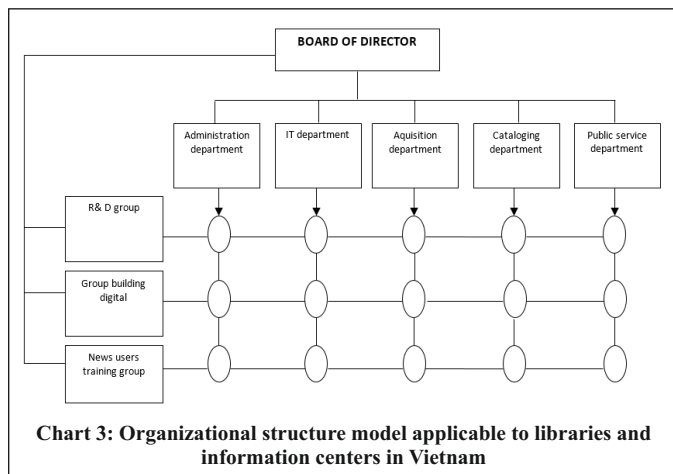


Chart 3 is the proposed organizational structure model for LICs in Vietnam. This is a highly flexible model, with this model, the Board of Directors of LICs will manage the work through 2 main axes.

The first axis: Consists of 5 function rooms, these are the basic function rooms that perform different tasks in LICs. High stable, relatively independent function rooms will ensure that professional activities and some other activities in the library are maintained.

+ Administration Department: Performing duties related to: Office; Financial budget; Human; Infrastructure.

+ IT Department: Performing tasks related to: Hardware; Software; Communication network system; Application of IT in library information activities.

+ Supplement Department: Performing tasks related to building and developing information resources; Document preservation.

+ Cataloging Department: Performing tasks related to document processing and information organization, creation of information products.

+ Public Service Department: Performing duties related to the provision of services: Document circulation; Consultation, reference; other services.

According to Robert D. Stuart and Barbara B. Moran [10] there is no perfect organizational structure for all LICs as choosing which model, including which rooms and departments depends on many factors such as the internal and external environment of each LIC. The proposed model in this study includes basic rooms in modern LICs, in fact these functional rooms can be merged or separated to suit libraries of different sizes.

The second axis: Consists of working groups set up to solve the specific tasks of LICs. The group established when LICs have a need to perform tasks that could not be done well by the specialized department. The number of working groups and which groups depends on each LICs. Members of a working group will be selected from personnel in specialized divisions based on the group's goals, duties and capabilities of each employee. The working group only has relative stability, the group can dissolve after completing the task and achieving the set target. However, some working groups can be maintained for a long time to carry out the regular tasks of LICs.

+ Research and Development Group: This is a group established by many large LICs in developed countries. This group performs tasks related to research and development orientation of LICs. The goal of the group is to research and propose solutions to develop, advise the board of directors in the development of strategic long-term, short-term plans, perform tasks related to marketing and communication and advertise the image of LICs.

+ Building digital library group: Building digital library is one of many important contents in modern LICs library activities. In Vietnam today, building digital libraries is a trend deployed by many LICs. From the practical experience of building digital libraries in countries around the world, it shows that building a

digital library is not usually done by a functional department in LICs. It is implemented as a project and undertaken by a working group. Implementation personnel are selected from many different specialized departments such as IT Department, Cataloging Department, and Supplement Department.

+ News user Training Group: News user training is an activity that is regularly conducted in LICs. Staff participating in this activity is selected from many different specialized departments based on the content to be taught as well as the pedagogical skills of each individual. That is why the training of news users in LICs should be implemented in the form of working groups.

Interpretation of the bases for proposing the model:

In order to select and propose the organizational structure model applicable to LICs in Vietnam, the author of this study based on the following bases:

+ Based on the current status of the development and transformation of LICs in Vietnam from traditional to modern.

+ Based on scientists' arguments about the organizational structure model in modern LICs.

According to Robert D. Stuart and Barbara B. Moran [10] radical restructuring of LICs organization is not a light work. Refining existing structures is much easier than implementing a completely new one. There are many limitations in both online and function, however, the complete deregulation is not the best approach. According to Krishan Kumar [7], LIC management in the electronic environment should try to avoid major fluctuations due to problems of the organization, including organizational structure and culture. Instead of radical restructuring, many LICs have changed dynamically. In a study mentioning the important trends in library management in the 21st century, Subal Chandra Biswas [2] mentioned the organizational model of LICs. According to Subal Chandra Biswas, in the early decades of the 21st century, most LICs will still apply a decentralized organizational structure but more communication between divisions within the organization. To strengthen the relationship between departments, it is possible to apply a "group approach" combined with online and functional models.

Synthesizing the above points of view, it can be said that, instead of thoroughly restructuring, most LICs will renew the current organizational structure model by combining with other organizational structure models to limit the disadvantages of the current model. This combination will create a hybrid model with many outstanding advantages to help LICs quickly adapt to the rapid changes of the modern library environment in order to achieve the set objectives.

+ Based on the legal documents related to the organization and management of LICs: The proposed organizational structure model applying to Vietnamese LICs basically still complies with the Model Regulation on organization and operation of the academic library [3] and the Model Regulation on organization and operation of the libraries of provinces and municipalities issued by the Ministry of Culture and Information [4].

+ Based on the outstanding advantages of the hybrid model

The hybrid organizational structure model is a modern structure model with many outstanding advantages. That is also the reason why many organizations, businesses, LICs around the world have chosen to apply it. The proposed structure for application in the management of Vietnamese LICs is a combination of functional model and teamwork model, so it creates flexibility in the system structure. This feature is very necessary in the organizational structure of modern LICs. According to Halbert, Martin, Cathy, Hartman and Susan Paz [5] in today's LIC environment, the hybrid organization model is popular. This model aims to: Consolidate the high management level of LICs; Focus on realizing strategic goals and directions; Use human resources effectively to meet the requirements of professional activities in modern LICs.

The application of the proposed model will help Vietnamese LICs increase their adaptability to changes from the internal and external environment. Being able to add or dissolve working groups in this organizational model provides the model's flexibility in adapting to rapid changes in the many professional activities of library information.

The proposed organizational structure model ensures stability for LICs when changing from an old organizational structure model to a new one. The proposed structure model applied to the management of Vietnamese LIC using a functional model as the foundation, so the application of this model will not make a big change in the restructuring of the organizational structure model. This is completely consistent with the views of researchers on the modern library organization model.

+ Based on the model's suitability with Vietnam's specific conditions

The organizational structure model proposed in this research is consistent with current characteristics and context of Vietnamese LICs. This is reflected in the model's ability to meet the requirements set out for the modern LICs management model in the current specific conditions of Vietnam. The proposed model

will help LICs perform well management functions such as planning, organization, control.

The model will create conditions for Vietnamese LICs to perform well the planning function. In the proposed model, the planning is to be carried out by the Research and Development working group. The research team will develop various types of plans and submit them to the board of directors for approval. Assigning this task to the working group will have many advantages in implementing and meeting the requirements for planning in a modern LICs. The working group can select personnel to participate in planning from all specialized departments in LIC. This ensures the need to expand the components involved in the planning, on the other hand ensures the comprehensiveness of the operational plans (Specialist Plan). From another perspective when the planning is specialized and assigned to a specialized department with the participation of the participants will be one of the factors that ensure the plans are implemented according to the correct process and quality.

The proposed organizational structure model applicable to Vietnamese LICs will well support the implementation of the organizational function. Applying the model will help Vietnamese LICs overcome the weaknesses of human resources such as qualifications or sense of discipline. The proposed organizational structure will improve the coordination among librarians compared to the functional structure and allow the efficient use of human resources. This structure ensures that employees in any position in LICs, still have the opportunity to develop their full capabilities. At the same time it helps to limit the shortcomings in the arrangement of employees in departments and divisions in the organizational structure. In the proposed model, a staff member in LICs, apart from working position in the specialized office, can also join the working groups. During the process of joining the groups, they also accumulate knowledge and experience, which is very important in improving the qualifications and skills of library information workers. This model creates conditions for library information workers to contribute more and maximize their internal resources. At the same time, it also creates conditions for them to learn about their own experiences to improve their qualifications, working skills and sense of discipline. This is very necessary for the modern LICs in Vietnam today.

The proposed organizational structure model applicable to Vietnamese LICs will create conditions for good control function. The proposed structure model is a combination model between functional model and team work model, the leader will manage activities in the library according to 2 main axes: functional departments and working groups. Therefore, compared with the functional model and the online model, the proposed model will create more favorable conditions for management leaders in operating and implementing work. The leaders and managers of LICs not only receive assistance and advice from the leaders of the functional departments, but also get help and advice from the heads of the working groups. This helps to reduce the work pressure of the leaders and managers of LICs. Processing information, making decisions will be faster, overcoming the stagnation.

Communication is one of the important contents of the implementation of control functions of the organization and management of LICs. Communication is considered as the glue that adhesives the members of LICs. The proposed structural model applied to the management of Vietnamese LICs will create a multi-dimensional information environment which was not available in the previous organizational structure models. The model creates conditions for information in LICs to be improved. Information flow in LICs will be carried out in many directions such as top down, bottom up and horizontally. This information environment helps the manager to quickly convey ideas and orders to members, on the other hand it creates favorable condition for managers to quickly receive feedback from levels.

CONCLUSION:

In Vietnam, in recent decades, library information activities have seen strong developments. Vietnamese LICs are transforming from the traditional model to the modern library model. This development brings many benefits for news users as well as LICs, but it poses many requirements for management activities. In order to improve the management efficiency in LICs in Vietnam, it is necessary to synchronously carry out many different solutions, including the organizational structure reform. The hybrid organizational structure model is a scientific management model which brings many benefits to LICs management. The outstanding advantages of this organizational structure model have met the requirements set for modern LIC management. This fact has been confirmed by many researchers and many LICs around the world have chosen this model to apply. The application of the organizational structure model proposed in this research to LICs in Vietnam will contribute to improving the management efficiency as well as the operational efficiency of LICs in Vietnam.

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